

Message Text

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42 L

ACTION EB-07

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7905

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 4552

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ENRG, IN

SUBJ: CONSUMER-PRODUCER PREPARATORY CONFERENCE

REF: (A) STATE 075013 (B) STATE 073868

1. AS WE WERE UNABLE TO SCHEDULE A MEETING WITH INDIAN DELEGATION CHIEF SANYAL, WE SENT HIM A PAPER OUTLINING USG VIEWS IN ACCORDANCE WITH REFTELS. SANYAL TELEPHONED THE DCM AFTER HE HAD READ THE PAPER AND SET FORTH THE FOLLOWING GOI VIEWS:

A. THE GOI DOES NOT WISH CONFRONTATION OR DISPUTE AT THE PARIS MEETING. IT WISHES TO PROCEED IN THE GENERAL SPIRIT OF CONCILIATION.:(

B. THE GOI IS MOST ANXIOUS TO PROJECT THE "DISTRESSING" ECONOMIC POSITION OF INDIA AS ONE OF THE MOST SERIOUSLY AFFECTED NATIONS.

C. WHATEVER AGENDA IS ADOPTED, THE MSA PROBLEM SHOULD RECEIVE THE HIGHEST PRIORITY.

D. WHATEVER IS ULTIMATELY DECIDED AT THE CONFERENCE, SOME FORM OF EARLY RELIEF SHOULD BE PROVIDED FOR MSAS, EVEN IF INTERIM IN NATURE.

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3. IN THE DISCUSSION WHICH FOLLOWED, THE DCM SAID THE US

BELIEVES THE AGENDA ITEMS SHOULD BE LIMITED TO OIL-RELATED PROBLEMS. SANYAL SAID THAT THE GOI HAS NO DESIRE TO RAISE THE ISSUE OF OTHER COMMODITIES BUT SINCE IT IS A PARTY TO VARIOUS DECLARATIONS AT DAKAR, HAVANA, ETC. IT WILL GO ALONG WITH WHATEVER CONSENSUS IS FORMED. IT WILL NOT DEPART FROM ITS PREVIOUSLY STATED POSITIONS ON OTHER COMMODITIES BUT BECAUSE OF INDIA'S OWN URGENT PROBLEM SOME STEPS PROVIDING RELIEF B ENERGY MUST BE TAKEN. SANYAL SAID HE SAW NO REASON WHY THE PRELIMINARY MEETING NEED DEAL SPECIFICALLY WITH WHAT COMMODITIES WOULD BE CONSIDERED OR NOT CONSIDERED.

4. INFORMED ABOUT US DESIRE TO AVOID POLARIZATION AND TRIL-ATERALISM, SANYAL SAID HE WAS OPEN TO ANY FORM OF ORGANIZATION WHICH WOULD ACHIEVE INDIA'S OBJECTIVE OF GETTING MSA ITEM AT THE TOP OF THE AGENDA. SANYAL SAID THE GOI HAD NO POSITION IN REGARD TO THE CONFERENCE CHAIRMAN.

5. COMMENT: SANYAL MADE IT ABUNDANTLY CLEAR THAT INDIA GOES TO THE PRELIMINARY MEETING WITH ONE OBJECTIVE ABOVE ALL: TO GET RELIEF FOR MSAS. HE MADE IT EQUALLY CLEAR THAT HE WISHED TO AVOID A CONFRONTATION, SAYING THAT AFTER ALL INDIA NEEDED HELP FROM BOTH THE DEVELOPED COUNTRIES AND THE OIL COUNTRIES. APPARENTLY, HE HOPES THAT THE OTHER TROUBLESOME ISSUES CAN BE FINESSED AT THIS CONFERENCE BUT IF THEY COME UP, INDIA WILL SIDE WITH THE NONALIGNED AS IT HAS IN NUMEROUS PREVIOUS CONFERENCES. INDIA'S NEED FOR RESOURCES, HOWEVER, AND ITS RESULTING DESIRE THAT THE CONFERENCE PROVIDE RELIEF, MAY GIVE CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS SOME INFLUENCE OVER HOW INDIA PLAYS OUT ITS ROLE.

6. SANYAL IS A COMPETENT BUT NOT OUTSTANDING SENIOR OFFICIAL OF THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS WHICH, IN THE INTERMINIST-ERIAL JOCKEYING FOR LEADERSHIP AT THE PREPARATORY CONFERENCE, HAS COME UP WITH THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE INDIAN DELEGATIONS. IN OUR DISCUSSIONS WITH HIM WE HAVE FOUND HIM QUITE INTERESTED IN TRYING TO WORK OUT US-INDIAN PROBLEMS AND GENERALLY COOPER-ATIVE BUT NOT ALWAYS EFFECTIVE.
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